

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS (HOPWA)

2005 PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

November 30, 2004

Amounts

2005 HOPWA Funds – **\$1,087,000**

Please note that the final award amount for 2005 is unknown at this time. Our budget is based on the preliminary estimates. Our budget will be adjusted when the award amount is known, using the same percentage distribution within five percent to each category as is reflected in the attached budget.

Uses of Funds

AIDS Alabama will use the 2005 Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds to:

1. Acquire the land and build a community residence setting in Lee County geared toward permanent housing for women with families (Rural Studio Project);
2. Support a statewide rental assistance program through qualified AIDS Service agencies;
3. Support a statewide master leasing program through AIDS Alabama and the AIDS Service Organizations;
4. Support existing HIV/AIDS housing programs in the state;
5. Support housing information and outreach to low-income, HIV-infected persons statewide;
6. Assist in technical assistance to communicate with the AIDS Service Organizations to build capacity concerning housing implementation;
7. Support continued operating costs and supportive housing to existing programs; and
8. Continue the resource identification for other facilities, methods, and resources to provide housing for the state's population living with HIV.

Alabama has five (5) types of housing programs geared toward persons living with HIV and AIDS. Those programs are:

Rental Assistance

- A statewide rental assistance program with the purpose of keeping persons stably housed who already have permanent housing and consisting of two types of assistance, emergency short-term rent, mortgage, and utility assistance (STRMU) and tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA), designed to provide ongoing subsidy to residents who pay rent based on their incomes. Since 1994 this program has aided over four-thousand (4000) unique Alabama individuals and families and ensured their ability to stay in housing.

Emergency Shelter

- There are no HIV/AIDS dedicated emergency beds in the state; however, existing emergency shelters provide emergency housing to persons with HIV/AIDS in Birmingham, Florence, and Mobile. These shelters are: The Firehouse Shelter, Salvation Army, SafeHouse, Jimmy Hale Mission, First Light, and Pathways.

Transitional

- One of only two (2) transitional housing programs in the state dedicated to persons with HIV/AIDS is in Birmingham and is operated by AIDS Alabama. The Birmingham program is known as Next Step housing and consists of fifteen (15) scatter-site (one, two, and three bedroom) units of housing/apartments and one (1) communal living facility with eleven (11) beds that provides an HIV-specific statewide chemical dependency program. Applicants are screened for eligibility, individualized care plans are written and agreed to, and persons may reside in these programs for up to two (2) years. There are forty (47) total available beds in the Next Step Program.

- The master leasing program will consist of leased apartments/houses in the state. These will support the step-down program for graduates of the statewide chemical dependency program and clients in other areas in the state.

Permanent Housing

- Agape House and Agape II offer permanent apartment complex living in Birmingham for persons with HIV/AIDS. There are twenty-five (25) one-bedroom units, three (3) two-bedroom units, and two (2) three-bedroom units in these two complexes. Magnolia Place in Mobile offers thirteen (13) two-bedroom units and one (1) one-bedroom unit.
- Family Places is a Birmingham-based program of five (5) scatter-site houses with four (4) three-bedroom units and one (1) four-bedroom unit for families living with HIV/AIDS.
- Alabama Rural AIDS Project currently offers ten (10) three-bedroom homes in rural areas of the state.

Service Enriched

- JASPER House in Birmingham offers fourteen (14) beds in a single room occupancy model for persons who are unable to live independently due to their HIV status, mental illness, and/or addiction challenges. All occupants are low-income and HIV-positive.

Background

The first year of HOPWA funding began in September 1994. To date AIDS Alabama has assisted over three-thousand nine-hundred (3,900) unique households with over nine-thousand (9,000) rental and utility payments to prevent homelessness of those living with HIV. Additionally AIDS ALABAMA provides two (2) HIV-specific transitional housing programs in the state. AIDS Alabama continues to work with local providers to increase capacity to operate and develop HIV-specific housing. Today AIDS Alabama contracts with eight

AIDS Service Organizations statewide and two (2) family clinics to provide case management, rental assistance, and outreach services, reaching all sixty-seven (67) Alabama counties.

USES OF FUNDS IN 2005

Land Acquisition and Construction

AIDS Alabama will use approximately **\$15,000** to procure sufficient property in Lee County to build a facility geared to moving women with children from a transitional to a permanent housing setting. The construction costs of this facility are estimated at **\$35,000**; an additional \$50,000 will be raised or donated from non-HOPWA sources to complete the facility. This effort is known as the Rural Studio Project.

Rental Assistance

AIDS Alabama will use **\$100,000** to fund both short-term and long-term rental assistance from this allocation for 2005. There were one-thousand and twenty-two (1,022) instances of rental assistance in the past year. Clients access this program by visiting one of the eight partnering AIDS Service Organizations or the family clinics in the state of Alabama and completing an application with a HOPWA-certified and trained staff member of that agency. The HOPWA certification process requires an initial training with annual re-certifications done by AIDS Alabama. The subcontractors (AIDS Action Coalition – Huntsville; Health Services Center – Anniston; West Alabama AIDS Outreach – Tuscaloosa; East Alabama AIDS Outreach – Auburn; Selma AIDS Information & Referral – Selma; Montgomery AIDS Outreach – Montgomery; Mobile AIDS Support Services – Mobile; and the University of Alabama at Birmingham Family Clinics – Birmingham and Montgomery) are involved in the decision-making process about how the rental assistance funds are expended.

Input from representatives from these agencies combined with data from needs assessments drive the protocols used in the rental assistance program. Since the program began in 1994, there have been a number of adjustments made to the program to balance the amount of funds available with the ultimate goal of avoiding homelessness, keeping families stably housed, and consumer empowerment to succeed in a permanent housing setting. To that end, there have been a series of changes that have resulted in slightly different implementations of the program around the state described below. AIDS Alabama never seeks a change to the rental assistance program without: 1) input from all the subcontractors and 2) a minimum of a 30-day notice to all agencies. Program implementation remains compliant with HOPWA regulations.

The applications are sent via facsimile to AIDS Alabama offices and processed within seventy-two (72) hours. Rental checks are sent to landlords with a return self-addressed envelope requesting a receipt of the rent check be sent to AIDS Alabama to be applied to that person's rent for the month. If a landlord does not return this receipt, investigators from AIDS Alabama look into the reasons why and ensure that the rent was indeed paid for the appropriate applicant. Applicants must re-apply and supply proof of need for each month of assistance, up to five months (or 21 weeks) in an assistance year for the Short-Term Rental, Mortgage, and Utility assistance program. Long-term rental assistance is similar to Section 8 with the resident responsible for a portion of the rent, based on the resident's income. Clients are expected to maintain quarterly contact with their social workers, as well as pay the appropriate portion of the rent and maintain utilities. The rental assistance programs will be supplemented by the HOPWA entitlement for the Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area. In excess of \$300,000 was expended in the prior fiscal year to ensure that low-income, HIV-positive individuals and families were able to maintain their permanent housing.

ASONA, the AIDS Services Organization Network of Alabama, serves as AIDS Alabama's HOPWA planning council. At present both the short-term

emergency assistance program and the long-term rental assistance programs are in effect. AIDS Alabama requires annual certification of these programs in order to access either form of rental assistance.

Leasing

AIDS Alabama will use **\$10,000** for a master leasing program in the state. This program is to be developed as a step-down program for those moving out of the statewide chemical dependency program. Housing options for individuals with HIV are limited in the state of Alabama, particularly in rural areas. Health Services Center in Anniston plans to initiate this program in their area in 2005. AIDS Alabama anticipates housing eight (8) individuals throughout the state through the master lease program within the funded year.

Some of the other partners (AIDS Action Coalition - Huntsville, Mobile AIDS Support Services - Mobile, West Alabama AIDS Outreach - Tuscaloosa, and East Alabama AIDS Outreach - Auburn) are also interested in leasing apartments/houses and setting up utilities for each of the units. Clients will access housing by visiting one of the participating agencies and completing an application. Upon approval each resident will sign a program agreement and will be responsible for paying rent according to HOPWA guidelines. Individual agencies will provide supportive services, including case management to residents of the program.

Supportive Services

AIDS Alabama will use **\$520,000** to support housing programs in the state. This support will include supportive services such as transportation, case management, first month's rent and deposits, and housing outreach as per HOPWA and HUD guidelines. AIDS Alabama provides these services in Birmingham and subcontracts for these services with eight other AIDS Service Organizations across the state.

Supportive services are needed to assist persons with HIV/AIDS in maintaining housing. In FY 2004 the Birmingham area provided eighteen

thousand seven hundred and forty-eight (18,748) units of transportation and case management services to seven hundred twenty-five (725) individuals/families. Across the state more than 11,000 low-income individuals/families living with the HIV virus were assisted through case management services, individualized housing plans, transportation assistance, emergency housing and financial assistance, and many other supportive services necessary to keeping HIV-positives person healthy and stably housed. These services mean that residents already in housing receive the necessary services to stay housed and healthy. A thorough assessment of applicants for HIV-specific housing is conducted. This assessment allows the case manager to design an individualized plan of care with each applicant, which meets his/her needs and increases his/her capacity to maintain stable housing.

Housing Information

AIDS Alabama will use **\$10,000** for continued Housing Information efforts to promote housing to individuals across the state. These funds will support various AIDS Service Organizations to promote the availability of housing assistance statewide. Outreach to rural areas has been dramatically increased due to the identification of growing numbers of persons infected in rural areas who have difficulty accessing services. Outreach creates an easier bridge for persons who may mistrust others offering assistance to the various programs and services that exist. Reaching people in all sixty-seven (67) counties is done in conjunction with the existing HOPWA Competitive grant also implemented by AIDS Alabama, offering outreach and linkage to services to persons in the most rural counties in the state.

In combination with the AIDS Service Organizations across the state, these funds are also used to create marketing materials to be used during outreach activities for the benefit of other providers who may have HIV-positive clients that are in need of housing but do not know where to refer for services. This funding will also create materials targeting consumers in order to ensure they are aware of HOPWA services. Outreach is critical in all areas but most

critical in rural areas of the state where knowledge of available services may be lower.

Technical Assistance

AIDS Alabama will use **\$2,000** in funds to provide technical assistance on projects for the AIDS Service Organization Network of Alabama. Specifically these dollars will be used to support AIDS Alabama staff time to work with the following agencies: Mobile AIDS Support Services in Mobile; Montgomery AIDS Outreach in Montgomery; Selma AIDS Information and Referral in Selma; East Alabama AIDS Outreach in Auburn; West Alabama AIDS Outreach in Tuscaloosa; Health Services Center in Anniston; and AIDS Action Coalition in Huntsville. Currently most AIDS Service Organizations have limited experience in providing housing services. AIDS Alabama will use technical assistance funds to provide training to AIDS Service Organizations regarding housing implementation.

Operating Costs

AIDS Alabama will use **\$264,300** in operating costs for the one hundred twenty-seven (127) permanent beds statewide and forty-seven (47) transitional beds available statewide. These funds cover furnishings, supplement utilities, provide property management expenditures (lawn care, basic maintenance, and repair), provide security services, and provide support to ensure appropriate upkeep for all HIV-specific permanent and transitional housing in the state as described above. AIDS Alabama anticipates the possible transfer of Magnolia Place in Mobile from Volunteers of America Southwest to AIDS Alabama. Magnolia Place has fourteen units, one (1) one-bedroom unit and thirteen (13) two-bedroom units. Management of this facility combined with support of the other statewide facilities would necessitate a half-time property manager for the southern part of Alabama.

Resource Identification

AIDS Alabama will spend **\$22,000** to provide identification of low-income transitional and permanent housing units in the state and to enhance the low-income housing development for persons/families living with HIV/AIDS. The development of HIV/AIDS specific affordable housing is necessary, particularly in the many rural areas of this state. This funding will assist in the planning and development of affordable housing in Alabama.

Administrative Fee

AIDS Alabama will spend **\$108,700** (10% as per regulations) on administration. The state service agency, ADECA, will receive 3% (\$32,610) as the grantee and AIDS Alabama will receive 7% (\$76,090) as the project sponsor.

AIDS Alabama		
Budget Addendum to 2005 State Action Plan		
HOPWA Entitlement		
Category	Revised Proposal 2/24/04	Proposed 11/24/04
New Construction	\$ -	\$ 35,000
Land Acquisition	\$ -	\$ 15,000
Rental Assistance	\$ 298,700	\$ 100,000
Leasing	\$ 80,200	\$ 10,000
Supportive Services	\$ 367,420	\$ 520,000
Housing Information	\$ 22,533	\$ 10,000
Technical Assistance	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Operating Costs	\$ 233,087	\$ 264,300
Resource Identification	\$ 21,160	\$ 22,000
Administrative Fee	\$ 113,900	\$ 108,700

TOTAL	\$1,139,000	\$ 1,087,000
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AIDS Alabama may be contacted for additional information about this program by calling (205) 324-9822 or writing to Kathie M. Hiers, Chief Executive Officer, AIDS Alabama, P.O. Box 55703, Birmingham, AL 35255. AIDS Alabama's email address is kathie@aidsalabama.org.

Specific HOPWA Objectives

HOPWA funding will be supplemented with other federal funding sources, such as the Ryan White C.A.R.E. Act, which allocates approximately \$13 million annually to Alabama, as well as other HUD programs. McKinney-Vento homeless assistance is available in the Birmingham area through AIDS Alabama and the Jefferson County Housing Authority and will be utilized to address the needs of HIV-positive persons who are homeless. Emergency Shelter Grant funding is also utilized when possible to prevent homelessness. Additional revenues are garnered through substance abuse and mental health funding. The Alabama Legislature supplements funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program, and various education programs are available through funding from the Centers for Disease Control and the Alabama Department of Public Health. Alabama's ten AIDS Service Organizations raise local private and government funds in order to successfully implement multiple housing and service programs.